

Message Text

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17

ACTION AEC-11

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FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7148

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L HELSINKI 0248

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH, BEXP, FI

SUBJ: TVO PROJECT URANIUM ENRICHMENT SERVICE

CONTRACT GIVEN TO SOVIETS

REF: (A) STATE 020613 (B) HELSINKI 0165 AND 3082

1. MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY (BROR WAHLROOS) INFORMED ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR FEBRUARY 4 THAT FINNISH GOVERNMENT HAD DECIDED IN MID-JANUARY TO PURCHASE URANIUM ENRICHMENT SERVICES FOR THE TVO PROJECT FROM THE SOVIET UNION AND THAT CONTRACT WOULD BE SIGNED FEBRUARY 6. DECISION WAS CLEARLY ON POLITICAL GROUNDS AND RESULTED FROM FINNISH INITIATIVE RATHER THAN SOVIET PRESSURE. WAHLROOS DID NOT FORECLOSE, HOWEVER, POSSIBILITY THAT IN THE FUTURE FINLAND MAY DECIDE TO PURCHASE ENRICHMENT SERVICES FROM THE U.S.

2. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, WAHLROOS SAID SOVIET UNION HAD BEEN ON RECORD AS BEING INTERESTED IN SUPPLYING ENERGY PRODUCING EQUIPMENT TO FINLAND AND AS YET FINNISH GOVERNMENT LEADERS "DO NOT HAVE THE COURAGE" TO BUY EQUIPMENT AND ENRICHMENT
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SERVICES FROM THE WEST. HE HAZARDED THE GUESS THAT

FOR THE NEAR FUTURE FINLAND WILL BE BUYING NUCLEAR POWER STATIONS EITHER FROM THE SOVIET UNION OR FROM ASEA ATOM IN SWEDEN. THE HOPE IS, HE SAID, THAT FINNISH LEADERS CAN SEE THEIR WAY CLEAR TO BUY ENRICHMENT SERVICES FROM THE US FOR AN ASEA ATOM PLANT TO BE BUILT IN THE FUTURE.

3. COMMENT: AS LONG AS SOVIETS ARE INTERESTED IN SUPPLYING ENERGY PRODUCING EQUIPMENT TO FINLAND, THE FINNS WILL CONTINUE TO GIVE THEM FIRST PREFERENCE. WITH 70 PERCENT OF ITS CRUDE OIL COMING FROM THE SOVIET UNION, FINNISH LEADERS ARE NOT INTERESTED IN TAKING ANY STEPS THAT MIGHT HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON THEIR MAIN SOURCE OF ENERGY. MANY LOWER LEVEL OFFICIALS LIKE WAHLROOS FEEL FINLAND SHOULD ENTERTAIN COMPETITIVE BIDS ON ENERGY PRODUCING EQUIPMENT FROM THE WEST IN ORDER THAT FINNISH ENERGY NOT BE SO COMPLETELY ALIGNED WITH THE SOVIET UNION. IT IS APPARENT THAT DAY WILL HAVE TO AWAIT A LESS CRITICAL TIME ON THE WORLD ENERGY SCENE.
KREHBIEL

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NNN

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